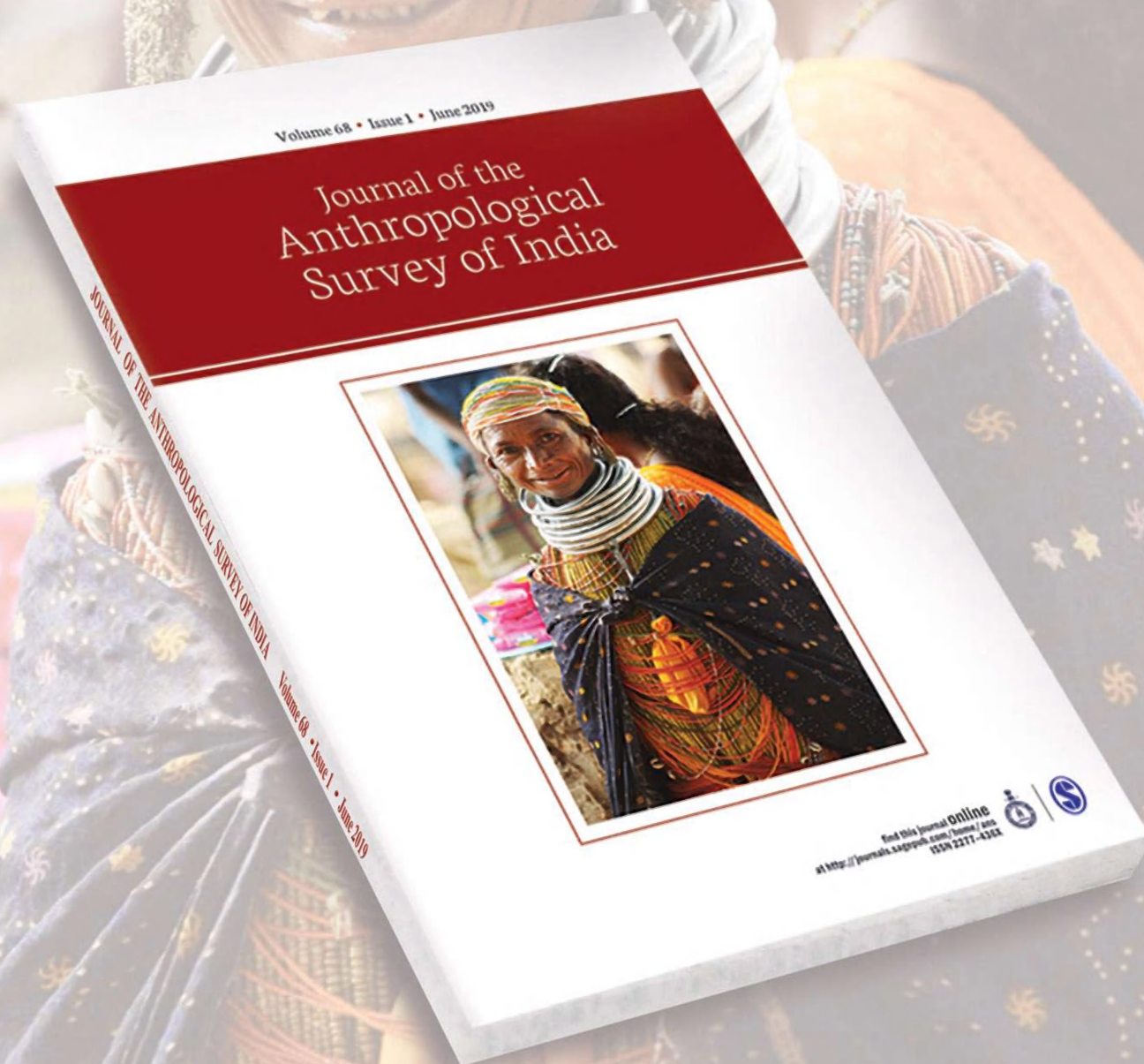




Anthropological Survey of India

# NEW LETTER

April - June, 2019







*Inaugural session of "Study of the Great Andamanese and Future Studies of Anthropological Survey of India". On dais from left to right: Shri S.A. Awaradi (Director, ANTRI), Director (An.S.I.), Shri Sanjeev Mittal, IAS (Secretary, Tribal Welfare, A&N Admn.) and Ms. S.A. Bellrose (Assistant Commissioner, Tribal Welfare, A&N Admn.), Dr. Umesh Kumar, Head of Office, Headquarter, An.S.I., Kolkata is delivering his lecture.*

## DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Dear Readers,



One of the notable achievements of the Anthropological Survey of India (An.S.I.) in 2019 is that its journal, titled Journal of the Anthropological Survey of India, is now being published by the internationally well-known Sage Publications. Its first issue was released in June 2019, and I am receiving a number of congratulatory messages for its cover and the contents. I am now requesting my well-wishers to send their valuable comments on it so that the quality of the journal can be improved upon with each of its numbers.

The An.S.I. came into existence as an independent organization on 1 December 1945, after being hived off from the Zoological Survey of India. It was then called the Department of Anthropology, Government of India, with its head office in Calcutta (now Kolkata). The first number of its journal's inaugural volume was published in January 1952. Then it was called Bulletin of the Department of Anthropology, and continued to be called so till 1960. However, its size changed. Till 1959, it measured 9"x 6.5"; and in 1960, its size increased to 12"x 10". That large size continued for two years, and then, it was restored to its earlier measurements, and has continued to be of the same size, with minor variations, till today.

The editor of the Bulletin of the Department of Anthropology was for its first two years its first Director, B.S. Guha. His was the first article in the foundational issue (vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 1-7), which was an account of his study of the inhabitants of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands in 1948-9. This visit was undertaken on the advice of A.V. Thakkar (of the Bharatiya Adim Jati Sevak Sangh), who wanted that the kind of ameliorative work that his organization had undertaken among the Bhils and other tribes of central India should be carried out



among the tribal groups of Andaman and Nicobar Islands. Guha offers an account of his ship voyage to Port Blair from Calcutta on 17 February 1948, along with a team of seven members that included S.S. Sarkar, who later emerged as one of the great physical anthropologists and ethnologists of the country. Guha's article also carried the photographs of Onge men and women, their huts, and one of Jarawa shelter. The inaugural issue also had four research papers on blood groups, one of them on Andaman and Nicobar Islands which Sarkar contributed. The journal amply attested the fact that anthropology was a holistic science of biological and socio-cultural aspects of human life.

In 1961 was the first incarnation (avatar) of the journal, during the directorship of N.K. Bose. It was then called Bulletin of the Anthropological Survey of India, because the name of the Department of Anthropology was changed to Anthropological Survey of India. This name of the journal continued till 1982. From 1983, it was changed to Human Science, a name that persisted unchanged till 1989. From 1990, the journal was named Journal of the Anthropological Survey of India (JASI). Once Sage took over its publication, we have continued with the same name. Since 1952, the journal's publication has been uninterrupted; however on some occasions in the past, we were constrained to bring out a combined issue of several numbers.

The Anthropological Survey of India, Ministry of Culture, Government of India is pleased to announce its collaboration with SAGE Publications India to bring out its flagship publication, "Journal of the Anthropological Survey of India." This journal has been publishing since 1952 and has now found a new home with SAGE Publications India from June 2019. SAGE is almost as old as the journal and has been in publishing since 1965. Known as a leading international provider in the global community of high-quality, innovative content spanning more than 1000 journals and over 900 new books, SAGE is the foremost name for the Humanities and Social Sciences with offices all over the world including India. Together, we aim to build the journal's profile on a global scale, maximising visibility and further expanding its dissemination. The journal is available online at <http://bit.ly/JournalANS>

Message from Sage Publications (India)

In its journey, the journal has published articles of seminal importance, contributed by the luminaries of those days. The Chief Editor, who was usually the Director of the An.S.I., often contributed the opening article on a subject of his choice. Accidentally, while perusing the past issues of the journal, I came across the manuscript of M.N. Srinivas's inaugural address

to a seminar that the An.S.I. had jointly organized with the Institute of Social and Economic Change, Bangalore (now Bengaluru), in early 1990 (JASI, 39 [2 & 3]: 218-21). In his article, Srinivas considered the People of India Project (POIP), which was inaugurated on 2 October 1985, as superior in methodology to the Human Relations Area Files (HRAF) of Yale University, which was undertaken at the beginning of the Second World War. The HRAF was totally based on published literature, the corpus of information that the itinerant travelers, missionaries, soldiers, and administrators provided. The academic world, however, was skeptical of these data, for they bore the streaks of prejudices, imaginings, and conjectures. By contrast, information for the POIP was collected through first-hand fieldwork.

One can appreciate this point in light of the fact that Srinivas argued that the job of anthropologists and sociologists was to have a 'field view' of society, in contrast to the historian's commitment to the 'book view' of the same people. If anthropology and sociology are 'field sciences' - 'your apprenticeship in these disciplines involves dirtying the seat of your trousers', as said Robert Park - history is an 'archival science'. Historians collect their data from archives, libraries, museums, and from private collections of individuals and families. However, these two disciplines are complementary, since a complete understanding of any society would require a knowledge of its past, and how it would explain its present formations. Srinivas emphasized the significance of the 'first-hand fieldwork', where the researcher himself or herself carries out the empirical work rather than dispatching a team of assistants to the field and depending entirely upon the information they bring. He said he was educated at 'four places': Mysore University, Bombay University, Oxford University, and the fourth place was the village of Rampura in Mysore (now, Mysuru). In this village, Srinivas spent one year, with eleven bullocks and one headman, and they all taught him much more about Indian culture, peasant behaviour and rationality, and the facts of life, than what he had learnt in three universities he attended at different points in life. The soul of anthropology and sociology is 'intensive field work'. Indubitably, field work teaches; we learn from the field.

Second, the origin of the POIP lay in a conversation K. Suresh Singh, the Director-General of the An.S.I., had with Mrs. Indira Gandhi. The former Prime Minister asked Singh if there was a book on the People of India. This inspired Singh to take up the massive project of documenting the communities in India, the volumes of published material resulting from this are still a valuable source of information, which are being consulted across different disciplines. In other words, the aim of POIP was essentially academic: to know probable answers to questions like 'Who we are?', 'To which communities do we belong?', 'How do we define, or juxtapose, ourselves vis-à-vis the others?',



'How does Indian unity result?' By comparison, the objective of the Yale Project was strategic, and it was funded precisely for this reason. Srinivas observes: "The project [Yale] was important to the Americans who were fighting global wars with the aliens" (p. 219). (p. 219). It is clear that POIP was not serving any utilitarian purpose; its aim was to render an understanding of Indian unity amidst its diversity.

Finally, it is interesting to know that Srinivas was appointed a Research Officer in the An.S.I. on a salary of Rs. 300 per month. He says (p. 220) he 'could command' only that much salary irrespective of the fact that he had two doctoral degrees, one from Bombay University, under the supervision of G.S. Ghurye, and second, Oxford University, under A. R. Radcliffe-Brown and later, E.E. Evans-Prichard. Fortunately, for him, a teaching job was created in Oxford, and he was appointed to that. He writes: "If the Oxford job had not come in the way, I would have willingly accepted the job in the Anthropological Survey of India" (p. 220).

On 12 April 2019, the An.S.I. held a meeting in the Seminar Room of the Eastern Regional Centre (E.R.C.), Kolkata, on the Jalianwala Bagh massacre. The speakers were from the Survey, both from the Headquarter and the E.R.C. Two issues were taken up in the discussion-meeting. The first concerned the lessons we learn from the Jalianwala episode of 13 April 1919, the day



*Jalianwala Bagh massacre and the society there after- a discussion*

of the Sikh Baisakhi festival; and the second, the anthropological approach for the study of this and the other global instances of a similar type. The second issue was particularly important because anthropologists are accustomed to the study of tribal and peasant societies, and the data they subject to analysis are collected through the method of participant observation. For animated discussion was also the issue of how anthropologists study the past events, for which they have to rely upon the written documents.

The 1919 Amritsar massacre, as Jalianwala event is often called, fills us with deep respect for our countrypersons who sacrificed

their lives for freedom, the fruits of which we have been enjoying since the first Independence Day. Those born in Independent India find it difficult to imagine the atrocities that the colonial government inflicted on the masses that fought relentlessly for liberation from the grips of the external rule. Observance of the days, like that of the Jalianwala massacre, and visiting the places where all this occurred, instills in us profound reverence for our freedom-fighters, the innocent, unarmed, people who were killed, and the nation to which we belong.

An important methodological point in anthropology is the distinction between the 'self' and the 'other'. Since the possibility of the 'other' being conceptualized in terms of several stereotypes, far from being correct, exists, the anthropologists are warned against this. They are advised not to succumb to the opinionated images, but keep their objectivity intact. Anthropologists consciously strive to be different from the commoners and the elite who may think differently about the 'other'. The colonialists thought of the 'other' as 'un-civilized', which needed to be changed for betterment; the mission of the colonial regime, as has been said in the past, was one of 'civilizing', and while doing this under fiat, it was barbaric, merciless, with no regard for the people and their future.

In case the 'other' raised its voice for liberation, to be out of the clutches of the rule, it was ruthlessly dealt with. The ruled were terrorized with fear - what reigned was, in the words of Barry Glassner, the 'climate of fear'. After the Jalianwala, which left according to the Civil Surgeon, Dr. William Dee Meddy, 1526 casualties, General R.E.H. Dyer, the British officer who had ordered his fifty soldiers armed with rifles to shoot on the assembly of people, came up with several punitive sanctions, such as Amritsar city's water and electric supply was cut off, flogging of people and imposing fines on them without trial, commandeering of cars, bicycles and carts, compulsorily retiring the lawyers and giving them the task of patrolling the streets, requisitioning of electric fans and the other electric gadgets that belonged to Indians for the use of British soldiers. In the street where on 11 April 1919, an English missionary, named Marcella Sherwood, was attacked by a mob, General Dyer made the Indian passerby crawl a distance of 200 yards on their bellies. It was known as the infamous 'crawling order'. The 'culture of fear' was being built up; the 'other' was being terrorized to succumb to the commands.

Mahatma Gandhi visited the Jalianwala Bagh in early November 1919. He addressed a large gathering, telling people that the most important quality they should internalize was to be fearless (nirbhaya), to try to transcend the reign of terror. Khushwant Singh, in his History of the Sikhs (Volume 2, 1966) tells us (p. 167) that under Gandhi's inspiration, a new organization, the Central Sikh League, consisting of the nationalists, was formed.

**Vinay Kumar Srivastava**



## RESEARCH UPDATE

### Anthropological Study of Nomadic, Semi-Nomadic and De-notified Communities

Under this Research Project, we have carried out extensive studies among fortysix communities across the country. Here we present brief outline of some of them:

#### Dhekaru

The Dhekaru is a small community. They live in Birbhum district, adjoining Jamtara district of Jharkhand. In West Bengal, they are distributed in seven villages under three police stations of Rajnagar Block, near Suri sub-division. Altogether there are 1174 people (2011 Census), of whom 191 are literate. Dhekarus of neighbouring Santal Pargana and Jamtara district of Jharkhand are scattered in nine villages. Despite the residential differences, the Dhekaru maintain social solidarity among the members of both states. Their oral traditions reveal that Santal Pargana is embodied in their culture core. Smelting iron and making of iron implements, arrow heads, plough shares, etc., is their traditional economic pursuit. They are highly skilled in preparing portable cannons and matchlocks.

During field study it was observed that in most of the villages, Dhekaru dwell in separate hamlets in some deserted area, away from the main village. Some caste groups, which are subjugated to lower rank in the Bengali society (Dom, Bagdi, Hadi) and neighbouring tribal communities (Santal, Koda, Sabar and Munda) occasionally maintain social bridges with the Dhekaru, but do not violate social norms of purity and commensality. Neighbouring communities, irrespective of caste, religion or tribe, treat them with suspicion. So, they do not get much chance to work as agricultural labourers in villages or vicinity of the villages. These caste groups do not allow Dhekaru women to enter into their houses and are always suspected to be the informers for thieves, as Dhekaru people are still stigmatised as petty criminals or thieves. The linguistic affinity of the Dhekaru shows that they had migrated from the Chotonagpur plateau. They generally speak Sadri language within their community. They speak in mixed Bengali and Hindi called Khottha language. According to Risley's *The Tribes and Castes of Bengal*, Dhekarus migrated from Chotonagpur plateau between 13 and 15 centuries, during the Third Laxman Sen dynasty, as specialists of making iron made spears, swords, axes, etc. They also fought several wars with the Birsingh Malla and later Chaitnya Singh. In a locally published article by historian M.N. Chakrabarty in 1860, it was said that the Dhekaru lived in association with other castes and tribal groups, like Santal, Munda, Bhumij in Rajnagar

block, and they crushed iron ores and smelted it to make sponge iron locally, which was used to make various weapons and agricultural implements. East-India Company, Kolkata, also engaged this community as master iron smelters and employed them as labourers in their company (McKay) at Mohammad bazar, Raniswar block, Birbhum, until 1856. However, after the closer of the McKay Company's unit at Birbhum, nearly 1500



*"A life less ordinary"- Dhekaru of West Bengal*

Dhekaru iron smelters lost their job, thus being compelled to indulge in petty thievery, highway decoity, and they adopted other unlawful ways of livelihood. Meanwhile, the British declared them as a Criminal Tribe under CTA 1871.

At present, nearly 560 families, little over 3000 persons of Dhekaru community, live in West Bengal and Jharkhand, scattered over 20 villages. Villages under the Rajnagar Police station namely Sahabad, Jahanabad, Tabadumra, Belera, Kanmora, Ranipur, Haripur, Suri-1, are the ones where Dhekaru are mainly concentrated at present. In addition, there are four other villages namely Harjanbazar, Langulia, Baidyanathpur, and Rajpur, where few more Dhekaru people can be found. On the other side of this area, i.e. in Jharkhand in Jamtara district under Kundahit block and police station, there are villages like Khajuri, Jhapdaha, Amladaha, Dhamadahara, Mandhara, Jokpahari, Patjor, Nalathana, Ghusrakota, where are scattered some families of Dhekaru. In the studied village Sahabad, out of twenty-seven families, twenty-two had AAY card; twelve families had PMY for housing; six persons get old-age pension. Out of twenty-seven families, only six families (twenty persons) have got the Scheduled Caste certificates. While discussing about the other families, the Block Development Officer of Rajnagar block and



Aligar Panchayat Pradhan, informed us that the six families who have got SC status may be due to their political connections, but the blacksmiths/Lohar/ Dhekaru are under the OBC category, not the SC in West Bengal.

### **Telaga Pamula/Yanadi**

The identity issue of Telaga Pamula is important because there is an ambiguity on the exact name of this community in the different places of Odisha state. On the contrary, a community named Yanadi is found in Ganjam district of Odisha, which is still inclined towards criminal activities as per the police version. However, the name of this community is not enrolled as a denotified community in Odisha. However, the Yanadi claim that their forefathers usually caught snakes from forests and sold the dried skin of snakes. Again, they also claim that their forefathers showed the tricks by inserting head in a 'dug hole' keeping the legs vertically straight and engaged in begging in the temple area, which is locally known as Mundapotha. The Yanadi are hesitant to identify them as "Telaga Pamula". The local people and administration identify the Yanadi community as Telaga Pamula.

The main concentration of the Yanadi community is in Sukunda village under the Sukunda Mouza of Digapandi Block, Barabazar Police Station of Berhampur Tehsil of Ganjam district. The habitat of Yanadi community in all cases is in isolated areas or outskirts of the village.

The Yanadi community is still stigmatized with criminal background. Both local people and local police administration believe that they are continuing with the practice of criminal activities in the form of burglary, snatching, etc. Therefore, the Yanadi community is under surveillance of police administration.



*Habitat and hut- Yanadi of Ganjam, Odisha*

Yanadi people are mainly engaged in various kinds of menial works, as tractor driver, pulling rickshaw and begging. The male folk are primarily engaged in wage labour. Begging is another important occupation usually practiced by female members and children of the community. The state of education is not impressive. The children are reluctant to go to schools, rather they prefer to beg along with their mothers.

The common diseases prevalent among them are cold and cough, stomach upset manifested in the form of diarrhea and dysentery and skin disease. They mostly depend on their traditional herbal medicines, which they usually collect from local forests and foot-hills. In case of emergency, they avail the facilities available in hospitals of Berhampur town. Toilets are not seen in their hamlets. The common practice of defecation is open ground, adjacent to the habitat. Drinking water is collected from the dug-wells/tube-wells and for bath and washing of clothes, nearby water bodies are the primary sources. The main problem is that the Yanadis are landless and poor. Due to lack of formal education and job opportunity, they are passing through unending episodes of poverty. Most of them are living in unhealthy and unhygienic habitats secluded from rest of the other communities. At the same time, they are also stigmatized and accused of criminal activities. Both factors are prime constraints for them to live and enjoy a healthy life.

### **Pasi and Khatik**

Pasi and Khatik are the de-notified communities of Uttar Pradesh. They claim that they belong to the Naag dynasty. They were originally a warrior community and had a glorious past, but the British stigmatized them as criminal communities to control their resources. After the Criminal Tribes Act was repealed, the Pasi and Khatik were declared as Scheduled Castes.

These people can be found in fifty-two districts of the country as a whole, primarily in Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal, Odisha, Maharashtra, Haryana, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh.

In Uttar Pradesh, the highest population of Pasi and Khatik is in Sitapur and Aligarh districts, while they are dispersed in Prayagraj, Rae Bareli, Hardoi, Unnao, Kheri, Lucknow, Bulandsahar, Kanpur Nagar, Basti, Jaunpur, Fatehpur, Kausambi, Pratapgarh. Pasi community accounts for 15.77% of the SC population in the state, making it the second largest group in this category, while the Khatik constitute only 2.25% of the SCs.

According to their mythology, both the communities have common origin but now have emerged as quite distinct and have their own subgroups. Pasi is settled in multi-ethnic villages, while Khatik are settled in urban areas due to their occupational priority. In both the communities, families are patrilineal,



patrilineal and patriarchal. Village exogamy and caste endogamy is observed. Monogamy is the norm, but polygamy is permitted in some cases. Marriages are settled by negotiation and dowry is in vogue, given in cash or kind. Inter-caste marriages are happening sporadic among educated persons.



*The Mother and Child - Khatik of Uttar Pradesh*

Traditional occupation of Pasi and Khatik was pig rearing, butchering and selling meat. As of now, Pasis are engaged in settled cultivation, pig rearing, wage labour, small businesses, petty trading, government and private jobs. Khatik engage themselves in selling fruits and vegetable, along with butchering and selling meat. Pasi have gradually left pig-rearing as this occupation is tagged with low social status; so both the communities are adopting different means of livelihood to raise their social and economic status.

In Uttar Pradesh, the sex-ratio of Pasi and Khatik is 930 and 895 respectively. Women in these communities are still the victims of patriarchy. In all aspects of family and social life, women are subordinate to men. Daughters receive no inheritance and decision making is in the hands of men. Both men and women prefer male issues to continue their lineage.

Our study reveals that they are gradually intending towards formal education and political participation. In urban areas, they are more socially inclusive, whereas in rural, they are isolated and excluded. Not only are constitutional privileges helping them in removing discrimination, exploitation and atrocities against them, but also some enlightened members of the community are social activists, raising voices against inequalities and justice at larger platforms. One major insight that we gained from our field work is that both the communities have felt the impact of vast social and political changes that India has been witnessing in the last several decades.

## Bhantu

The Bhantu of the Andaman Islands were originally brought from Muradabad of Uttar Pradesh and were settled in the Andaman Islands during the decades of the twentieth century by the then colonial administration. Due to their criminal habits of stealing, looting and organizing robbery, the British Government declared the Bhandus as the Criminal Tribes under the Criminal Tribes Act (III) of 1911. Quite a large number of them were declared convict and accordingly were imprisoned in the then United Province and later they were confined in the settlements under the care of the Salvation Army. A large number of Bhantu from the custody of several jails in United Province were brought to Andamans in 1924 under the settlement programmes. They were allotted free land for settlement and cultivation at places of Bhatu Basti, Caddlegunj, Aniket and Ferrargunj of South Andaman. The adults settled down to an agricultural life and their children were educated in their village schools, and when they grew up, they were brought under employment in saw mills and at wharfs. They prefer to call themselves as Bhatu.

In their own narrative, Bhandus claims themselves as descendants of the Rajput, who were the soldiers of Rana Pratap Singh of Chitor. Chitor was raided by the Mughals and the Rana was defeated and as a consequence many Bhandus were killed by the Muslims. Those who survived and escaped took shelter in the forests and led a nomadic life. Finding no alternative for subsistence, they started looting and robbing to eke out their existence. Some of the Bhantu, who had no hereditary lawful occupation or other means of livelihood, and could not indulge in crime, had no option but to beg.

Now the Bhantu are employed in the Government sector in various capacities. They have left their practice of agriculture, though they have agricultural land. Instead they have engaged the members of Ranchi communities, Bengali families to cultivate their land as share-croppers. It becomes very difficult for the educated men or women to get a suitably educated match and the option of inter-caste marriage has come into prevalence. At present very few are only able to converse properly in their native dialect. With the passing of time, the Bhantu have adjusted with the new environment and have undergone a lot of changes in their innate habits. They are also categorized as "Pre-1942" or early settlers of the islands, and were later brought under the OBC category by the Andaman and Nicobar Administration. Many of the Bhantu have embraced Christianity, but the majority are still Hindu. Bhandus settled in the villages of Caddlegunj and Aniket in South Andaman district to a great extent are able to maintain their cultural identity even today. Although many third generation migrants do not know how to speak their dialect



properly yet they can understand it and realize the importance of conserving the cultural aspects. The change in social and political life, betterment of economy, close association with people of other communities and by giving up the old habits, Bhantus have now acquired a higher status in the local society.

### Yerava

An intriguing relationship obtaining between society and habitat can be observed among the Yeravas of Karnataka. The Yerava are considered as the de-notified tribe. They come under the category of the Scheduled Tribe of Karnataka. They are mainly distributed in Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Kerala. However, they are mostly distributed in different villages like Jangalhadi, Chinnehadlu, Ayrisulli of Kodagu District of Karnataka. Each of their habitats is situated in the midst of deep forests. Etymologically, Yerava refers the 'people who take loan', as they have been referred to by their neighbouring communities. Earlier they used to take loan from the socio-economically dominant groups. However, earning a square of meals through bondage slavery to the moneylender under terms of repayment failure was the fate of survival. They were the inhabitants of Wayanad District of Kerala, later escaped and migrated to forests villages of Kodagu district in search of livelihood from forest resources. They have thorough knowledge of medicinal plants and the use of waste products. Earlier there was a small group of Yerava settled in a village called Karaikandi, from where later they had dispersed to various places of Thithimati.

There is uniqueness in the naming pattern of children. Names are identical and distinctive from neighbouring communities. Names usually reappear in an interval of one or two generations, like Kari, Bhojakki, Boja, Malli (Yerava names), where an essence of teknonymy can be seen. They speak in Yerava dialect, which includes a combination of Kannada and Malayalam also. Exogamy or clan (chemma) endogamy is strictly prohibited among them. There are four subgroups of Yerava-Pani, Panjari, Badagas and Kage. Among these, the Pani and Panjari are dominant groups. Pani co-exist with Paniyans of Kerala and are found mostly around Kerala border, whereas Panjaris are regarded as classical Yeravas. Kage is 'Khakhe' in actual terms and Badagas are Panjari Badaga and both come under Panjari. They worship goddess Chamundeshwari and the spirits of ancestors, symbolized by a *trishul* near tulsi plant in every courtyard of Yerava family. They also maintain a sacred place called *ata*, which is situated a little distance from the main settlement. The practice of shaman (a lady practitioner) was also witnessed during a special ritual for puberty. They have chosen an occupation in coffee plantation along with engaging themselves as cooley (porter). They are also seen to carry out

agricultural activities which they call *thotte*. There are some common ailments found among them that include anemia (more in females), gastric issues, blood pressure, which may be related to their dietary habit (non-vegetarian food and alcohol mostly) and unhygienic condition (especially among the women). One of the main reasons for their slow pace of economic growth is excessive expenditure on performing funeral rites which is more than their birth rituals leading them to debts in most of the occasions. Their level of education is quite impressive among the present generation.

### Yerukula

Most of the tribal communities of India are witnessing incessant efforts of progressive measures from the State Government as well as Central Government. However, there are certain sections of tribes which are still in the stern condition of mental agony. One such community is the Yerukula of Andhra Pradesh. In Idate Commission report for Denotified Communities (2017), they are being listed as Yerukala in 1(A) No.12.

Their name Yerukula is derived from *eruka*, which denotes 'prophecy' in Telugu language. Yeruka *chepputa* refers to fortune telling. Needless to say that fortune telling was one of the traditional occupations of Yerukula and that was mostly confined to womenfolk of the community. Yerukula believe themselves to be the progeny of Ekalavya, who was a celebrated archer and marksman of the Mahabharata. Therefore, sportsman's skill and spirit still exists in their blood. Kurru Bhasha is the dialect of the Yerukula and in some other texts, it is referred to as Yerukula Bhasa. However, there is a rare use of own dialect among them. A mixed dialect having a combination of Telegu, Tamil and Kannada is the lingua franca. They are distributed all over the state of Andhra Pradesh with high concentration in Guntur district. They are mainly Hindu by religion. Some of them embraced Christianity in the coastal areas, especially in Guntur



Venkat Rahul Ragala - the boy with golden arms



and Prakasam districts. The Yerukula in Krishna, Guntur, Prakasam and Nellore districts are educationally more forward than those in other districts of Andhra Pradesh.

The total population of this community as per the 1971 Census is 1,62,560 that further increased to 3,75,209 in 2011 Census. Based on their occupation, the Yerukulas are divided into a number of sub-groups like Dabba Yerukula, Uppu Yerukula, Eddu Yerukula, Kavali Yerukula, Bajanthri Yerukula, etc. But as per the study taken up by Anthropological Survey of India in the Karutlapalli village and Mavina Marada Hali village in the Anantapur District of Andhra Pradesh (2019), the researchers could identify more detailed sub-groups of Yerukula. Those are Gedhi Cheppe Vaalu (the fortune tellers), Kunchi Koresolu (broom stick makers), Dhampolu (Basket makers), Ooru Yerukalolu (settled agriculturist and don't know the Yerukula bhasa), Pandulu Koresolu (pig rearers) and Thalolu (rope makers). Meena Radhakrishna (1989) stated: "The trading communities of Madras Presidency, the Yerukulas, Koravars and Korachas were declared criminal tribes in 1913 under the Criminal Tribes Act of 1911".

They were stigmatized by the then British Government and forced into different 'reformatory' colony in Guntur in 1913. Stuartpuram (earlier known as Bethapudi) is one such colony in Guntur district named after Sir Harold Stuart, the then Home Member of the Madras Government, who first persuaded the establishment of colonies with the help of British Salvation Army. As per the documents, Yerukulas were traders of grain and salt who used to operate across the Madras Presidency. They used to load their goods on donkeys and bullocks, and travelled with their families, supplying essential goods from the coast to far-flung areas in the interior. After the introduction of roads and railway connection by British Government in 1850s, wagon replaced the domesticated donkeys and the Yerukulas lost their traditional means of livelihood. They not only dealt with the trading business but also relied on forest and agricultural produce. They used to make baskets, mats, brooms as well as brushes. Some of them were also very good athletes and dancers. But the policies introduced by the British Government cut them off from the common forest land as well as pastures and they could no longer source the raw material for their livelihood. Even their fortune telling capability made the British administration suspicious about the whole community. The Andhra Pradesh Government issued order in 1976 declaring Stuartpuram no longer a reformatory for criminals but a free colony.

Once, Sri Ratan P. Watal, the present Member-Secretary, EAC-PM and Principal Adviser (Social Sector), NITI Aayog took the charge of collector in Guntur and during his tenure, he also

showed special interest in the development of the Yerukula colonies. But even after abandoning their ways of criminality for more than 40 years, the Yerukulas are still continuing with the stigma of the crime. Bankers are still reluctant to lend money to them. But even with the continued stigma Yerukulas could manage to bring laurels for our country. Recently, Sri Ragala Venkat Rahul from Stuartpuram grabbed the gold medal (men's 85 kg category) in the 2018 Commonwealth Games (Australia). The people are still optimistic that the dilemma of the stigma will wipe out in due course of time with the continued representation of the community members for the pride of our nation.

### Community Health, Disease and Genetic Structure of Indian Population

In accordance with the on-going research project, "Anthropological Study of Nomadic, Semi-Nomadic and De-notified Communities", the Physical Anthropology division of the Survey has been carrying out fieldwork among the Bhar (Uttar Pradesh), Bansphor (Meghalaya), Ghasi (Odisha) to ascertain nutritional status along with general health and hygiene status of the community under broad objectives of "General Health Hygiene and Nutritional Anthropometric Study among the De-notified Nomadic, Semi-nomadic Communities."



*From laboratory to mass - anthropologist among the community members*

### Community Genetics and Health (Human Genetics Extension Programme)

Collection of bio-genetic samples for identification of "Molecular Heterogeneity of Breast Cancer" was undertaken.



## EVENTS

### Health Awareness Programme

A team of anthropologists from the North-Western Regional Centre, Dehradun organized a week long health-awareness camp for screening genetic disorders among the Jaunsari of Uttarakhand.



*In the health awareness camp*

### Research follow-up

A brain storming academic session that lasted for three days from 24th April, 2019 to 26th April, 2019, at the North-West Regional Centre, Dehradun, was held for assessing the progress made in the on-going National Project, "Anthropological Study on De-notified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Communities". Under the academic leadership of Director of the Survey, research personnel and research fellows of the Survey, presented the characteristics of the socio-cultural complexes of the forty-six

different communities which had been anthropologically explored in several states of the nation.

In this workshop, each team was asked for presentation of findings based on the empirical data they had collected on the communities through extensive fieldwork. In addition to socio-metric approaches that had taken towards in understanding the status of each community, findings of consumer expenditure survey were also presented in that workshop.

The workshop was summed-up with the Director's address on 'Writing of Report - a State of Art'. He emphasized on the structural uniformity of each report, applying funneling down method of major, highlighted observation on studied communities. A comprehensive report of 2500-3000 words, with proper reference citation on each community, apart from a descriptive account, should be submitted to the office. Each report would comprise an introductory part containing general account of the community; historiography and area/location of fieldwork, etc. This section should also include the issue of several synonyms, the question of identity, vis-a-vis relations with other communities. The second part of the report would deal with the narratives about the community. Why and how did a community that once had glorious past became 'criminal' in due courses of societal processes. Their dismal present and uncertain future would be the primary component of this part.

The third part of the report should deal with the social organization of the community. While dealing with the 'social organization' of a given community, Prof. Srivastava stressed upon Professor Raymond Firth's thoughts in analyzing societal complex of each community within and around. The next part would be devoted to survival strategies of the community by means of livelihood management, where findings of consumer expenditure survey would guide us in understanding aspiration of the community as 'consumer' towards market economy. This section may describe breakdown of traditional occupation and not being able to cope up with mainstream occupation and if that happens then the crisis in the society multiplies, thus may lead to a migration, or in other words permanent detachment from socio-ecological milieu of own habitat to some communities. While discussion on the current socio-economic status and consumer behavior of the community will deal, level of educational exposures at individual level as well as perceptible



foundation of the community on health and wellbeing should be treated an integrated component, which would appear in the next section of the report.

Each report must deal with the development initiatives and the community participation on the perspectives of role of three stakeholders - community, state and NGOs. It may describe the development programmes in operation, entitlement of fundamental right to access voter card, ration card, Aadhaar card, MGNREGA job card, etc.

The next segment of the report covers the perception of the community - how are these people thinking of their stigma, whether they are still attached to the stigma, or have become free of stigma. People's narrations from all age sets and genders, uttering inner voice of the people - agony of the present and the melancholy in visualizing gloomy future as a citizen of an independent "sovereign, socialist secular democratic republic", whether their desire to live ceases to exist, would be emphasized in this section. Finally, the report on each community would be concluded with suggestions for fruitful activities; underlying practical agenda to sensitize people as well as pointing out remarkable change, if anything has occurred on current socio-economic perspective of the nation as a whole and specific to that locality in particular.

Since that workshop was devoted to holistic discussion on the on-going research project; prospect of time-bound series of publication for larger domain of the academia was also emphasized.

### **Man-power training**

For the benefit of the junior and senior research fellows, the An.S.I. organized a workshop on 'research methodology' from 30 April to 4 May 2019 at the Conference Hall, E.R.C., Kolkata. The research fellows from different regional centres of the An.S.I. attended the workshop, along with the other scientific staff. It

was a gathering of about seventy participants. Each day the workshop lasted from 10 a.m. to late in the evening. The objective of the workshop was not only to apprise the participants with the techniques and methods that are employed in anthropological research, but also to introduce those who had recently joined the Survey to the kinds of project that are going on; also, some senior scholars delivered lectures on how they carried out their researches.

All aspects of the anthropological research were covered in the workshop. Museum studies, human growth and development, remote sensing, cultural ecology, culinary art, and molecular genetics, were some of the topics on which lectures were delivered. This year, in the national project that deals with a study of denotified communities, along with nomadic and semi-nomadic, we have introduced a survey of the consumer



*Our descendants - orientation course under Research Fellowship Programme*

expenditure to have a quantitative assessment of the lifestyle of the people. The results of this survey will be integrated with the qualitative study that is also being done on these communities. A lecture was devoted to this in the workshop on this theme. This also familiarized the participants with the method of interpreting quantitative data and arriving at conclusions that are presented in qualitative terms. Alongside, there was a session on the statistical methods. The workshop gave equal attention to both quantitative and qualitative research.



## Workshop

Andaman and Nicobar Regional Centre of the Anthropological Survey of India organised one day workshop on "Study of the Great Andamanese and Future Studies of Anthropological Survey of India" on 20 June 2019 at Port Blair. Shri Sanjeev Mittal, Secretary (Tribal Welfare), Andaman and Nicobar Administration, graced as the Chief Guest of the workshop. Prof. V.K. Srivastava, Director, Anthropological Survey of India; Ms. S.A. Bellrose, Assistant Commissioner (Tribal Welfare) and Executive Secretary, Andaman Adim Janjati Vikas Samiti (AAJVS), Andaman and Nicobar Administration; Shri S.A. Awaradi, Director, Andaman and Nicobar Tribal Research Institute; Dr. Siddharaju, Deputy Director (Tribal Health), Directorate of Health Services; Dr. M. Sasikumar, Director, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies (MAKAIAS), Kolkata and Prof. Anvita Abbi, Linguist, Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi, were among the dignitaries and scholars to address the holistic tribal situation of the Great Andamanese.

Dr. Umesh Kumar, Senior Ecologist and Head of Office of this Survey, Kolkata, welcomed the house and explained the theme of the workshop with a purview of the recent study on Great Andamanese that had been conducted by the team of scholars of the Survey.

On addressing the gathering, Shri Mittal emphasized the mechanism of proper translation of field based empirical findings in framing comprehensive tribal welfare/development policies. He also acknowledged continuous contribution of the Anthropological Survey of India both to fundamental research and also in structuring tribal (PVTG) policies of these islands for more than half a century. He also appreciated the role of Zonal Anthropological Museum, Port Blair in mass-communication through documentation and dissemination of the tribal scenario of these islands to millions of tourists, students and scholars for years. His address contained the role of the



*Yesterday, today and tomorrow - comprehensive dialogues on the Great Andamanese of Andaman Islands. Seen in the picture (from Left to Right) are Shri S.A. Awaradi, Dr. M. Sasikumar, the Director, and Ms. S.A. Bellrose.*



Union Territory Administration through its agency Andaman Adim Janjati Vikas Samiti (AAJVS) in monitoring tribes in general and the Great Andamanese in particular, despite everchanging socio-cultural scenario of the entire bay islands. Ms. Bellrose, Assistant Commissioner (Tribal Welfare) and Executive Secretary, Andaman Adim Janjati Vikas Samiti (AAJVS), Andaman and Nicobar Administration emphasized on more synchronization between research domain and administrative machineries in policy implementation programmes of these tribes. Shri Awaradi spoke of the inseparable role of the Anthropological Survey and U.T. Administration towards the betterment of the tribes in terms of protecting them not as a biological species but also as a repository of unique cultural traits.

In his address, Prof. Srivastava, Director of the Survey, meticulously referred to the significant contributions of eminent researchers who joyously ventured into each nook and corner of these islands in exploring the tribal world. He stated that the communities of the Andaman have been de-centred from people's view and one of the major aims of the Survey is to centre these communities so that people should know more about them. He said that such *terra incognita* is bound to build the stereotypes and prejudices these communities have been suffering from since long. For this, first hand field studies are only the essential tool to sense the ground reality, which is sincerely taken care by the Survey. Prof. Srivastava also stressed upon that as the spokesmen of these tribal communities, researchers from the Anthropological Survey of India are always ready to join hands with the administration in extending meaningful service delivery components for further progress and prosperity of the tribes.

Dr. Sasikumar, Director, MAKAIAS, Kolkata, said that the recent study on Great Andamanese is an excellent endeavour as this tribe has not been in limelight since long as compared to the other PVTGs of A&N Islands. He appreciated that the way island administration listened to the suggestions of anthropologists like T.N. Pandit and arranged a separate settlement for the Great Andamanese in Strait Island in 1969, which helped in improving their population statistics over decades. He remarked that the socio-cultural change among the Great Andamanese is now evident, they are becoming self-reliant and administration should look into facilitating them so that the aspirations of younger generations can be fulfilled properly. Prof. Abbi, Linguist from JNU, Delhi, and a Padma Shree Awardee said over a period of time many aspects (like language and many cultural traits) have been lost by the Great

Andamanese. She stated that language encodes the philosophy, beliefs and value system of a community. Therefore, it is important for us to look into the language studies to get a better understanding about the social system of any community. She said that the world view of Andamanese language is very unique as it doesn't match with the languages spoken by the other PVTGs.

Day long workshop was segmented in some technical sessions for indepth discussion. The first technical session on the theme 'Study of the Great Andamanese' was chaired by Dr. M. Sasikumar. In this session, Shri Amit Kumar Ghosh, Superintending Anthropologist (Culture), presented a review of literatures in the areas of studies among the Great Andamanese, which gave a holistic idea of the history of the Great Andamanese tribe. Dr. Nilanjan Khatua, Superintending Anthropologist (Culture) delivered a lecture on the socio-economic aspect of the Great Andamanese. Dr. Venugopal P.N., Assistant Anthropologist (Physical); Dr. Shiv Kumar Patel, Assistant Anthropologist (Physical) and Dr. Priyanka Airi Goyal, Assistant Anthropologist (Physical), presented their study of the nutritional anthropometry and general health assessment of the Great Andamanese. Dr. Umesh Kumar, Senior Ecologist, spoke on the degree and dimensions of change that have inevitably taken place among the members of the Great Andamanese over time. He also highlighted the demand of the members of Great Andamanese which he came across during his interaction with the community in recent times.

Later during the discussion, Ms. Bellrose highlighted that the administration has been organizing regular health camps and awareness programmes among the tribes. She remarked that it is very difficult for the administrators to bridge the gap between the knowledge dissemination and what they perceive because of their cultural practices for which administration always welcomes the expertise from the anthropologists, social scientists and researchers so that steps can be taken for upliftment of the community. Dr. R.C. Kar, CMO (Retd.) and Ex. Deputy Director (Tribal Health) A&N Health Services remarked that there is a need of regular visits of doctors to the Strait Island so that proper health facilities should be provided to the Great Andamanese. Dr. Siddharaju said that the change in the lifestyle among the Great Andamanese tribe is the main cause for the rise of prevalence of certain non-communicable diseases among them. He said that it is worrisome that the adolescents and young adults are showing more incidence of hypertension, obesity and diabetes which is a matter of great concern for the policy makers.



He told that health department has been providing iron and folic acid supplementation to the pregnant women of this community but mere distribution is not sufficient. There is a need that consumption of these supplementations should be made in the presence of ANM's and Health workers residing with the tribe. He also said focus should also be laid on the non-pregnant, non-lactating women and adolescent girls so that their anaemic condition could be checked properly. He also highlighted that the tribe should be made aware of the diet they should follow so that the problem of increasing obesity among them can be taken care off.

The second technical session exclusively dealt with the future course of actions of the Anthropological Survey of India in the Andaman and Nicobar Island, in terms of designing research modules in order to responding to the time. This session was chaired by Prof. V.K. Srivastava, Director of the Survey, himself. In this session Dr. Khatua gave a presentation on the researches that had been carried out at several points of time among the tribal communities of A&N islands by various scholars of An.S.I., followed by a panel discussion on the kind of research projects that can be launched in future among the different communities of A&N islands.

During the discussion, Shri A. Justin opined that there is a need to study the aspect of authority structure among the tribes of the A&N islands. He also said that there is a need to look into the ways through which revival of traditions, belief systems and cultural practices of these tribes can take place. Dr. Dubey from Zoological Survey of India said that studies can be taken up regarding the prevalence of vector-borne diseases among these tribes so that preventive measures may be adopted by the administration for its timely control. Dr. Kadimuthu, from Jawaharlal Nehru Rastriya Mahavidyalaya, Port Blair, highlighted that the students coming from the PVTG's of these islands feel the need to get exposure to the outside world. Efforts should be made by the administration to facilitate their needs, providing them opportunities so that their aspirations can be fulfilled properly. Shri S.A. Awaradi said that it is a very important issue on how to preserve or rejuvenate the traditions and culture of the Great Andamanese as culture acts as an anchorage for the community. He also highlighted that there is a need to encourage the Great Andamanese to practice their own traditional activities like fishing and hunting, so that their susceptibility to modern lifestyle diseases can be controlled. He said that administration should make Strait Island as the economic and cultural hub for them so that they could be

encouraged to go back to their homeland after completion of their tenures in various government departments in Port Blair.

On Chair, Prof. V.K. Srivastava said that the aspects of political anthropology in these tribal societies ever ignored earlier. Therefore, in the future An.S.I. will conduct researches on studying the political aspects of the tribes with special reference to gender and age. He said that with this kind of studies, an insight in the past traditions of these tribes which have been diluted now can be found and an opportunity to revive their traditions may be provided to them. He remarked that museums play an important role in keeping the knowledge of the people alive by providing them an opportunity to come and create their material culture in a group situation which can be exhibited and also through these activities knowledge can be transmitted on to younger generations. He concluded with conviction that the An.S.I. will continue to work on all the aspects of the tribes and other communities residing in these islands so that a holistic picture on all the socio-cultural and biological aspects can come out. Dr. Umesh Kumar culminated the workshop with a formal vote of thanks.

### **International Museum Day**

To mark the International Museum Day- 2019, the Central Regional Centre of Anthropological Survey of India observed the day as guided by the theme of this year "Museums as Cultural Hub: The Future of Tradition" on 18th May 2019. International Council of Museum (ICOM) advocated the theme to raise awareness about Museums being important means of cultural exchange, enrichment of cultures and development of mutual understanding, cooperation and peace among people.

Children are the building blocks of a better tomorrow, thereby it was planned to have an eventful outcome with the school students. Different competitions like sit and draw and open house quiz were organized for students of first to tenth standards. A few themes for drawing competition like 'Tribal Art and Culture' and 'Swachata Abhiyan' were decided for the competition. Students belonging from 1st to 3rd standards were given the freedom to colour the canvas as they could reflect their mind, while students from 4th to 10th standard were tried into theme based portrayal. A team of juries was to appraise the drawings. In the mean time, to utilize the stop gap, all the participants were asked to take a tour round the museum meticulously, as the quiz to follow would invite questions on





*Celebration International Museum Day at the Central Regional Centre, Nagpur*

the content of the displays in Zonal Anthropological Museum of Central Regional Centre. The quiz program was quite interactive and the parents and teachers took great interest in responding to the questions. The quiz was organized with an aim to raise awareness about the museum and the objective behind an Anthropological Museum.

Based on the marks, merit awards of 1st, 2nd and 3rd prize, excluding five consolation prizes were distributed. Participants were provided with a certificate of participation. A small exhibit was arranged to display previous year's competition to encourage the participants. As so current years' paintings were displayed for a week. Some refreshment packets were arranged for all the participants. The day found its grandeur with the presence of many retired employees and senior anthropologists, of whom Dr. J. Sreenath enlightened the audience about the importance of the Museum and gave a brief note on the galleries related to Human Genetics and Evolution. Dr. B.P. Urade, Superintending Anthropologist (Physical), explained the significance of the International Museum Day. Dr. Sanjay Shukla, Assistant Keeper, demonstrated the displayed objects of the galleries of migration and cultural variation with special reference to Central India.

In addition, Dr. Shukla delivered a lecture on the techniques of preservation of the artifacts.

The Zonal Anthropological Museum, Anthropological Survey of India, Port Blair, celebrated the International Museum Day in a befitting manner. On this occasion an interactive educational session on the theme "Museums as Cultural Hubs: The Future of Tradition" border of different Orphanage homes of the South Andaman.

The programme was inaugurated by Shri Shailendra Kumar Singh, Director, Directorate of Social Welfare, Andaman and Nicobar Administration, Port Blair. More or less seventy children from an orphanage participated in the 'Draw and Colour' competition "Through the Children's Eye" and portrayed their creativity through poster making with encouragement of Dr. Nilanjan Khatua, Head of Office, Anthropological Survey of India, Ms. Banita Behera, Assistant Keeper, Zonal Anthropological Museum.

On 20th June 2019 an Exhibition titled "Through the Children's eye" was opened to the public for a period of one month at Zonal Anthropological Museum with a small inaugural ceremony by lighting of lamp by the Special Guest, Shri S.A Awaradi,





*Civilization and Museum- through the Children's eye*

Director, ANTRI, Andaman and Nicobar Administration, Dr. M. Sasikumar, Director, Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies. The program was graced with the presence of the Director, Anthropological Survey of India who conveyed his valuable comments on the exhibition.

### Occasional lecture series

- To commemorate the 100 years of Jallianwala Bagh Massacre, the Eastern Regional Centre of the Survey organized a discussion session on "Remembering Jallianwala Bagh Massacre" at its Eastern Regional Centre, Kolkata. Prof. Vinay Kumar Srivastava, Director, Anthropological Survey of India delivered a lecture on the theme on 12th April, 2019.
- The Andaman and Nicobar Regional Centre, Port Blair of the Anthropological Survey of India organized a guest lecture on the topic 'My Days among the Jarawas (1998-2012)' on 18th April, 2019 at 04:00 PM in the seminar Hall of the office



*Narrative on perceptive Medical Science*

premises. It was delivered by Dr. Ratan Chandra Kar, Chief Medical Officer (Retd.) and Ex. Deputy Director (Tribal Health), Andaman and Nicobar Health Services.



# NEWS

## World Environment Day

World Environment Day-2019 was observed at all Regional Centres of the Survey on 5th June, 2019 in a befitting manner. In-house discussion, plantation programme were primarily carried out to mark the occasion in a graceful manner.

In continuation with this occasion, an in-house discussion on "Environmental Anthropology" was organised on 7th June, 2019 at the Eastern Regional Centre, Salt Lake Campus of the Survey. Prof. Ranjana Ray, Professor Emeritus, Department of Anthropology, Calcutta University graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. Prof. Kamal Kant Misra, Former Director-in-Charge, An.S.I. and Prof. A. Chellaperumal, Head of Department, School of Social Sciences & International Studies, Pondicherry University, were the other distinguished speakers in that discussion.

## Rajbhasha

*Hindi Timahy Kryashala* (Quarterly Hindi Workshop) was conducted among the staff members at all Regional Centres and Head Quarter of the Survey.

## Collaborative Programme

- The Survey extended financial support for organizing a National Seminar on "Historical Geographies of Location and Cultural Evolution in India" organized in Department of Geography, Delhi School of Economics, New Delhi.
- The Survey provided a grant for holding workshop on "Qualitative Methods in Social Sciences, Ethnography, Narrative and Social Stories" held from 10th June to 14th June, 2019 at OKD Institute, Guwahati.



*Environment, Society and Anthropology- in understanding the essence of the World Environment Day. Professor Ranjana Ray is delivering her talk. On her right are Prof. K.K. Misra, Prof. A. Chellaperumal, Dr. K.M. Sinha Roy.*

## International Yoga Day

International Yoga Day-2019 was observed at all Regional Centres as well as Zonal Anthropological Museums of the Survey on 21st June, 2019 in a befitting manner.

## Participation in National/International Seminar

- Dr. (Mrs.) R.R Gowloog, Superintending Anthropologist (Cultural) participated in the International Seminar on "Community and Cultural Multiplicity in North East India



and South Asia: Ethnography, History and Society" organized by the North East India Council for Social Science Research (NEICSSR) from 20th May to 22nd May, 2019 at Shillong Law College, Dhanketi, Shillong.

- Dr. Abhishikta Ghosh Roy, Anthropologist (Physical) participated in the International Conference on "Health and Medicine" held at Chandigarh, on 22nd May, 2019 and presented a paper on 'BRCA2 and Male Breast Cancer.'

#### Representation of Survey/Government of India/Abroad

- Dr. Ratna Dhar, Superintending Anthropologist (Cultural) attended an interview board as an External Member at Department of Anthropology at Mahatma Gandhi Antarrashtriya Hindi Vishvavidyalaya, Wardha on 16th April, 2019 for a department project on 'Diversities of Identity Imagined India among Younger Generation of Indian Diaspora'.
- A contingent of Research Personnel of the Survey attended Joint Forensic Review Meeting with DPAA team, U.S. on 26th April, 2019 at the Head Office, Kolkata.
- Shri C. Raghu, Anthropologist (Cultural) attended the meeting held on 10.06.2019 in the chamber of Assistant Commissioner (TW), Directorate of Tribal Welfare to discuss the issue regarding the enumeration census of the Sentinelese tribe.
- Prof. Vinay Kumar Srivastava, Director, Anthropological Survey of India, Ministry of Culture, Govt. of India, Kolkata met Admiral D.K. Joshi Hon'ble Lt. Governor, Andaman & Nicobar Islands on 21st June, 2019 to inform him about the ongoing research projects in the Anthropological Survey of India.

#### Outcomes

##### *Matriliny among the Khasis* by M. Sasikumar

Women in matrilineal societies are seen as empowered to face the challenges of innovations compared to their counterparts in patrilineal societies. But no matrilineal society, at least in India, can be found where women enjoy absolute authority and power. There is a general notion that all the matrilineal societies are matriarchal as well. But matriliney and matriarchy are not synonymous. Matriarchy implies the dominance of women in decision making. Though the matrilineal system was much more widely distributed in India, the matrilineal communities and the communities bearing matrilineal elements are chiefly found in the north-east and south-west parts of India. The Khasi of

Meghalaya is an important tribal group following the matrilineal system in the north-east part of India. This volume discusses the social system of the Khasi in detail from both historical and present perspectives. It also tries to understand the role, power and function of both men and women in a social system where the position of women has been said to be more comfortable due to the matrilineal system.

## Matriliny among the Khasis

A Study in Retrospect and Prospect

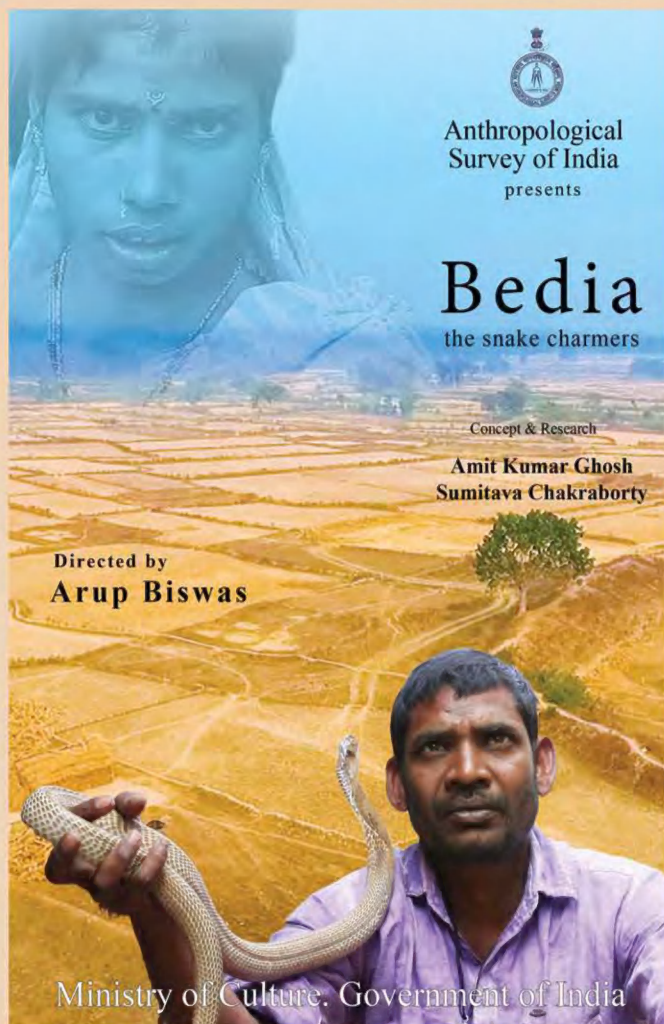


**M. Sasikumar**

*Bedia- the snake charmers* by Amit Ghosh and Sumitava Chakraborty (19 min. Full HD)

Among many other modes of folk recreation in rural society, snake charming is a popular one and ancient too. Bedia is a community with strong foundation of traditional wisdom to earn livelihood through snake charming. They are skilled in catching snakes, extract poisons, taming those dreaded creatures as like as common domesticated animals and make those as the primary resource for sustenance.





The Bedia or the snake charmers are more or less distributed all over the country. In West Bengal they are designated as Scheduled Tribes, whereas in some other states they belong to Scheduled Caste categories or De-notified nomadic communities. "Bedia - the snake charmers" is a vivid documentation on the life of the Bedia community through an ethnographic lens.

#### Others

- 31st Executive Committee meeting was held at North Western regional Centre, Dehradun on 23rd April, 2019.
- Anti-Terrorism Day was observed on 21st May, 2019 at all Regional Centres and Head Quarter of the Survey.
- A two days workshop on Public Finance Management System was organized among the staff members of the Survey from 3rd June to 4th June, 2019.

#### Promotion

Shri Arup Roy, Assistant Anthropologist (Cultural) and Dr. H. M. Maralusiddaiah, Assistant Anthropologist (Cultural) were promoted during this quarter.

#### New recruitment

Smt. Roma Das, Assistant Anthropologist (Cultural) and Smt. Koel Mukherjee, Anthropologist (Physical) were appointed during this quarter.

#### Superannuation

Shri Victor Syiemlieh, Office Superintendent, Shri Kalipada Saha, MTS; Dr. Bhagavatula Venkara Ravi Prasad, Assistant Anthropologist (Physical) and Shri Erothu Pitambaru, Assistant, retired from active government service on attaining the age of superannuation.

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*Front Cover* : J. Anth. Sur. Ind. (JASI) after makeover

*Back Cover* : World Environment Day - our commitment to future generation

Rajbhasha Karyashala

Yoga session - a step towards the healthy body and mind

Swachhata Avian - a step towards the cleanliness



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